

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 054578

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, SREF, HA

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN HAITI AND HAITIAN REFUGEES

1. A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES MET WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS (ARA AND ORM) MARCH 6 TO DISCUSS THE TREATMENT ACCORDED TO HAITIANS CLAIMING POLITICAL ASYLUM IN THE US AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN HAITI.
2. AMONG POINTS RAISED IN MEETING, NCC REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT THE NCC AND OTHER VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ASSOCIATED IN THE "COALITION FOR A NEW FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY" CONSIDER DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON HAITI RELEASED BY THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE LAST DECEMBER DOES NOT ADEQUATELY REFLECT CONTINUED REPRESSION IN HAITI. SPECIFICALLY, NCC AND THE COALITION TAKE POSI-
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TION, BASED ON REPORTS OF CWS REP IN HAITI AND OTHER SOURCES, THAT REPRESSION HAS INTENSIFIED SINCE MARCH 1976, WHEN PIERRE BIAMBY BECAME INTERIOR MINISTER AND AUTHORIZED MASS ARRESTS.

3. IN ADDITION, NCC REP EXPRESSED CONCERN TO DEPARTMENT REGARDING TWO HAITIANS DEPORTED FROM THE US WHO MAY HAVE

SUFFERED PERSECUTION AFTER THEIR RETURN TO HAITI. ONE CASE RAISED WAS THAT OF CELESON NOCENT (OR INNOCENT), DEPORTED IN NOVEMBER 1974. (ALL DEPARTMENT INFORMATION ON THIS CASE WAS FORWARDED TO EMBASSY UNDER COVER OF DE SANTILLANA/IRONS LETTER OF FEB. 18, 1977 WITH REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION.) SECOND CASE IS THAT OF JEAN CLAUDE AUGUSTAVE, BORN OCTOBER 5, 1956 IN LEOGANE AND DEPORTED FROM MIAMI ON JAN. 5, 1977. NCC IS CONCERNED FOR SAFETY OF AUGUSTAVE SINCE HIS FAMILY IN HAITI WROTE A LETTER TO HIM AT THE INS DETENTION FACILITY IN EL PASO DATED FEB. 18, 1977, MORE THAN A MONTH AFTER AUGUSTAVE WAS DEPORTED. NOCENT (OR INNOCENT) AS EMBASSY IS AWARE RE-ENTERED THE US LAST YEAR AFTER CLAIMED ESCAPE FROM PRISON IN HAITI AND IS CURRENTLY UNDER INS DETENTION.

4. NCC REP REQUESTED APPOINTMENT FOR A GROUP OF HAITIAN REFUGEES AND THEIR VOLUNTARY AGENCY SUPPORTERS TO MEET WITH A HIGH OFFICIAL OF THE DEPARTMENT TO DISCUSS POINTS OUTLINED ABOVE. NCC ALSO PLANS TO PROPOSE THAT VOLAGS IN HAITI AND EMBASSY WORK TOGETHER TO MONITOR SAFETY OF DEPORTEES FROM THE US.

5. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY REQUESTED TO PROVIDE EVALUATION OR ASSESSMENT OF NCC CHARGE THAT REPRESSION IN HAITI HAS INTENSIFIED SINCE MARCH 1976. SAME CHARGE IS ALSO REFLECTED IN JAN. 17 PRESS RELEASE OF THE COALITION FOR A NEW FOREIGN AND MILITARY POLICY CRITICIZING THE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT. (COALITION RELEASE FORWARDED TO EMBASSY UNDER DE CONFIDENTIAL

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SANTILLANA/MEADE LETTER OF FEB. 18, 1977.)

6. EMBASSY ALSO REQUESTED TO REPORT RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION INTO CASE OF CELESON NOCENT, OR EMBASSY'S VIEWS ON CONFLICTING INFORMATION ON CASE, ASAP. DEPARTMENT WILL FORWARD ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON CASE OF DEPORTEE AUGUSTAVE SOONEST FOR EMBASSY INVESTIGATION.

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